

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: MOST NOTABLE DEVELOPMENT DURING THE SENATE'S
FIRST DAY OF DEBATE WAS THE PCI'S ASSERTION THAT IT
CONSIDERS ANDREOTTI'S MINORITY GOVERNMENT AS AN "INTERMEDIATE
PHASE" TOWARD CREATION OF A BROAD COALITION OF "ALL DEMOCRATIC
FORCES." THE PCI'S STATEMENT SUPPORTS A WIDELY VOICED VIEW
THAT THE "MONOCOLORE" GOVERNMENT WILL NOT LAST MUCH BEYOND
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CHRISTMAS, BY WHICH TIME BOTH THE DC AND THE PCI HOPE TO

STRENGTHEN THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS. THE SENATE'S CONFIDENCE VOTE WILL TAKE PLACE THIS EVENING (AUGUST 6). IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT A PCI MAYOR WILL BE ELECTED IN ROME (AS THE PARTY OF RELATIVE MAJORITY IN A PCI/PSI/PSDI COMMUNAL GIUNTA). END SUMMARY.

1. IN THE FIRST DAY OF FULL SENATE DEBATE FOLLOWING PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI'S PRESENTATION OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM, THE OFFICIAL COMMUNIST (PCI) POSITION TO ABSTAIN ON THE CONFIDENCE VOTE WAS OUTLINED BY SENATE GROUP LEADER PERNA. ACCORDING TO HIS SPEECH, THE PCI VIEWS THE ANDREOTTI'S "MONOCOLORE" AS A "GOVERNMENT OF TRANSITION." THE PCI DECISION TO ABSTAIN STEMS FROM TWO FACTORS "THAT ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE GENERAL NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY: TO DRAVE THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES CLOSER TOGETHER AND TO PROMOTE THE RENEWAL OF THE POLITICAL ORDER; TO ASSERT--THROUGH JUST AND TIMELY SOLUTIONS--THE FORCE AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY." IN CONCLUDING THAT THE PCI DOES NOT WISH TO ATTRIBUTE TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT A CREDIBILITY OF ITS OWN, PERNA DECLARED THAT "THIS ABSTENTION AND THE GOVERNMENT THAT DERIVES FROM IT ARE AN INTERMEDIATE PHASE TO MAKE POSSIBLE THE ADVANCEMENT OF THAT PROCESS OF A LARGER UNITY OF ALL THE WORKING AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND TO FACE IMMEDIATELY THE GRAVE ECONOMIC CRISIS."

2. COMMENT: THE PCI'S POSITION CAN BE READ ON TWO PLANES. ON THE ONE HAND, IT SERVES TO ASSURE THE PCI RANK AND FILE THAT BY ABSTAINING THE PARTY HAS NOT SOLD OUT TO THE DC, AND THAT IT WILL NOT SUSTAIN THE LIFE OF A DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT INDEFINITELY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PCI ALSO SERVES NOTICE TO THE DC, PSI AND LAY PARTIES THAT IT HAS AGREED TO SUPPORT A DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT FOR A LIMITED PERIOD ONLY, AND THAT FURTHER STEPS TOWARD THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE WILL BE DEMANDED AS THE PRICE FOR CONTINUED PCI SUPPORT. THE PCI'S POSITION LENDS FURTHER WEIGHT TO THE WIDELY SHARED VIEW THAT THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT WILL LAST NOT MUCH BEYOND CHRISTMAS. BY THAT TIME, BOTH THE PCI AND THE DC HOPE TO CONSOLIDATE AND STRENGTHEN THEIR CURRENT POSITIONS--AN OUTCOME IN WHICH THE PSI POSITION WILL BE THE KEY. END COMMENT.

3. IN CONTRAST TO PERNA'S CALM AND "BUREAUCRATIC" DELIVERY, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VETERAN SOCIALIST LEADER NENNI DELIVERED A BRIEF AND ASCERBIC SPEECH HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ANDREOTTI'S FAILURE TO INDICATE CLEARLY "WITH WHOM AND UNDER WHAT POLITICAL BANNER HE INTENDS TO GOVERN." WHILE THE PSI WILL ABSTAIN, NENNI ASSERTED, IT WILL NOT GIVE THE DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT A BLANK CHECK. ITS ABSTENTION IN THIS EVENING'S VOTE WILL NOT IMPEDE THE PARTY IN VOTING FOR OR AGAINST INDIVIDUAL PIECES OF LEGISLATION. PSDI AND PRI SPEAKERS ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WILL PURSUE POLICIES OF

"CRITICAL ABSTENTIONS."

4. A POTENTIALLY COMPLICATING FACTOR AROSE FROM THE MSI/DN'S AUGUST 5 ANNOUNCEMENT (REPORTEDLY A COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE ALMIRANTE AND TEDESCHI REFORM FACTIONS) OF A "DISPOSITION TO ABSTAIN" PROVIDED THAT ANDREOTTI DENIES THAT HE CONSIDERS THE PCI'S ABSTENTION AS "DETERMINATIVE." THE MSI/DN'S SURPRISE STANCE IMMEDIATELY PROVOKED A NERVOUS REACTION FROM THE SOCIALISTS. IN AN EDITORIAL AUGUST 6, THE SOCIALIST'S ORGAN, AVANTI, CALLS ON ANDREOTTI TO DECLARE THAT HE HAS NEITHER SOLICITED NOR DESIRES AN MSI/DN ABSTENTION AND IN FACT REPUDIATES THEIR "INSOLENT REQUEST." SHOULD THE MSI/DN ABSTAIN, THE EDITORIAL INDICATED THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT COULD CAUSE THE PSI TO CHANGE ITS POSITION FROM ABSTENTION TO NON-SUPPORT.

5. COMMENT: THIS DEVELOPMENT IS A FURTHER INDICATION OF A SERIOUS SPLIT WITHIN THE MSI/DN. THERE IS INCREASING TALK THAT A GROUP OF 15-20 ANTI-ALMIRANTE PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE PREPARING TO BREAK AWAY AND FORM A NEW, NON-FASCIST, RIGHTIST PARTY. SHOULD THE MSI/DN ACTUALLY ABSTAIN (AN UNLIKELY PROBABILITY SINCE IT IS POLITICALLY INFEASIBLE FOR ANDREOTTI TO RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY), IT WOULD VERY LIKELY CAUSE THE PSI (AND POSSIBLY OTHERS) TO VOTE AGAINST. THE PCI'S POSITION WOULD THEN ONCE MORE BE DETERMINATIVE ON THE CONFIDENCE VOTE. END COMMENT.

6. IN OTHER POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED LATE AUGUST 5 ON A "POLITICAL DOCUMENT" WHICH WILL PERMIT FORMATION OF A THREE-PARTY COALITION (PCI, PSI/PSDI) FOR THE CITY OF ROME WHICH WILL BENEFIT FROM THE ABSTENTION OF THE PRI. THE REPUBLICANS WILL, HOWEVER, PROBABLY SUPPORT THE COALITION ON THE BUDGET VOTE (WHERE A MAJORITY VOTE IS REQUIRED). THE DC WILL BE IN "CONSTRUCTIVE OPPOSITION." ELECTION OF THE MAYOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND GIUNTA MEMBERS WILL, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, TAKE PLACE ON AUGUST 9. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT ROME'S NEW MAYOR WILL PROBABLY BE A COMMUNIST. LEADING CANDIDATES ARE LUIGI PETROSELLI AND UGO VETERE.

7. FINALLY, DC SENATOR TAVIANI WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE FOR RAI/TV, THE FIRST OF THE JOINT COMMITTEES TO BE RECONSTITUTED FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS. VICE-PRESIDENCEIS WENT TO THE PSI'S ZITO AND THE PCI'S QUERCIOLO. THE DC'S PICCHIONI AND THE PCI'S VALENZA WERE ELECTED SECRETARIES. COMMENT: TAVIANI'S SELECTION TO HEAD THIS IMPORTANT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE IS INDEED DISAPPOINTING. AS AN OLD-TIME GENOA PARTY BOSS AND FORMER DOROTEO LEADER, HIS ELECTION WILL DO NOTHING TO REFURBISH THE DC'S IMAGE. AS ONE WITH A GENEROUS VIEW OF THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE LEFT, HIS

OVERSIGHT OF RAI IS NOT LIKELY TO VE VIGOROUS. END COMMENT.
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